

Recommendations by the Accreditation Team and Report of the Accreditation Visit for the Professional Preparation Program at Occidental College

Professional Services Division

March 1, 2000

Overview of this Report

This agenda item includes the finding of the accreditation team visit conducted at Occidental College from February 27 through March 1, 2000. The report of the team presents the findings based on reading the Institutional Self Study Report, review of supporting documentation and interviews with all constituencies of the institution and program.

Accreditation Recommendations

- (1) The team recommends that, based on the attached Accreditation Team Report, the Committee on Accreditation make the following accreditation decision(s) for Occidental College and both of the credential programs: **ACCREDITATION**

On the basis of the recommendation(s), the institution is authorized to recommend candidates for the following credentials:

Multiple Subject Credential
CLAD Emphasis

Single Subject Credential
CLAD Emphasis

- (2) The staff also recommends that:
 - The institution's response to the preconditions be accepted.
 - Occidental College be permitted to propose new credential programs for approval by The Committee on Accreditation
 - Occidental College be placed on the schedule of accreditation visits for the 2005-2006 academic year

Background Information

Occidental College is an independent, coeducational college of liberal arts and sciences. Although founded in 1887 by a group of Presbyterian ministers and laymen, Occidental has had no formal religious association since 1910. It is governed by a self-Perpetuating Board of Trustees, is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, and holds membership in a number of regional and national organizations related to higher education.

The first baccalaureate degree was conferred in 1893, and graduate instruction leading to the Master of Arts degree in selected fields was inaugurated in 1922. By authority of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing, Occidental recommends candidates for the Single Subject and Multiple Subject CLAD Emphasis Professional Clear teaching credentials.

The mission of Occidental College is to provide a gifted and diverse group of students with a total educational experience of the highest quality – one that prepares them for leadership in an increasingly complex, interdependent and pluralistic world. The distinctive interdisciplinary and multicultural focus of the college's academic program seeks to foster both the fulfillment of individual aspirations and deeply rooted commitment to the public good.

Occidental students represent varied intellectual interests, socioeconomic backgrounds, racial and ethnic groups, religious beliefs, nationalities, and social and political convictions. This diversity finds its expression not only in the variety of academic programs and options open to the student, but also through the entire range of student organizations and enterprises, college cultural events, visiting lecturers, and forums, all of which taken together comprise the many facets of life in the academic community.

This Institutional Self-Study report reflects a revision of the teacher education program that was first approved during a regular site visit by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing in February 1993. Most of the elements of that program remain, but have been enhanced since 1995-96 by an increased emphasis on preparing teachers for teaching in a pluralistic, multicultural, multilingual society. At that time Occidental was approved by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to offer its Multiple Subject and Single Subject Credentials with a Crosscultural Language and Academic Development Emphasis. The college continues to offer the MS and SS CLAD Emphasis Professional Clear Credentials with essentially the same course and field work elements, but with a decidedly strong and distinctive thrust toward leadership in diverse schools and communities. This is well suited to the "...self-motivated, independent minded, and intellectually talented students..." the college recruits. Related content and process improvements have been added at bi-weekly Education Department meetings, self-study in preparation for Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Accreditation (spring, 1999), discussions at the Teacher Education Advisory Board (TEAB) meetings, input

from the Alumni of Occidental in Education (ALOED) Board, surveys and assessments.

The Educational Leaders Program in place at the February, 1993 CCTC review was the product of discussions about the curriculum in the teacher education program that began in 1989, and continued almost weekly for two years as the faculty made revisions of the program to reflect changing strengths and interests, and commitment to providing the best possible experience for preservice teachers.

The new curriculum took effect for the first time in the fall of 1992. It reflected the department's attempts to utilize the unique role at Occidental: (1) a strong undergraduate liberal arts education that emphasizes multicultural understandings with "excellence and equity" as a major theme is continued into the fifth year; (2) qualified students are invited to apply for a Master of Arts in Teaching degree that permits them to study with professors in the academic disciplines of the college; (3) undergraduate students interested in teaching are able to take courses in a Preparation for Teaching Program; and (4) the location in urban Los Angeles provides opportunities to teach in metro-area schools rich in diversity. No sooner was the 1992 program approved and begun, however, than the college implemented its plans to convert to a semester system. The college began the new semester calendar in August 1994. It was at that same challenging time when the department began developing the revised program to meet the standards of quality for Crosscultural, Language and Academic Development emphasis credential, which included hiring a new colleague with expertise in bilingual, cross-cultural education. The 1994-95 academic year was a transition year pending approval of the new Crosscultural Language and Academic Development emphasis.

Preparation for the Accreditation Visit

The commission staff consultant was assigned to the institution in the Fall of 1998 and had telephone conversations with the Department Chair and other faculty during the Spring of 1999. A meeting with the Department Chair and other full time faculty was held on campus in the Spring of 1999. Discussions were held regarding team size and configuration, standards to be used, interview schedule, the documents room, format for the Institutional Self-Study Report, and other logistical and organizational arrangements. The original team member selection was made in the Fall of 1999 and telephone conversations were held with all three team members. A further meeting was held on campus late Fall of 1999 in which a review of the interview schedule, school site visits, preconditions, facilities for the visit, computer availability was completed with the Department Chair and other faculty.

The institution prepared the Self-Study Report responding to the eight Common Standards and the Multiple Subjects/Single Subjects CLAD Emphasis Program Standards. The institution also incorporated a section showing the manner in which the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP) were also

used for candidate evaluation. The team found self study document to be substantial in the response to the eight Common Standards. However, the team noted some inconsistencies or incomplete information in the response to selected MS/SS-CLAD Emphasis Program Standards. The institution also provided the team with substantial support documentation. Team members were able to clarify the selected areas of inconsistent information early in the accreditation process, and this resulted in an improved understanding of program implementation by the team members.

Selection and Composition of the Accreditation Team

A decision to have three team members was made cooperatively with the Department Chair and faculty. The decision was to have one K-12 practitioner and at least one higher education member who had expertise in multiple and single subjects CLAD programs and program coordination. Team members selected had appropriate experience, expertise and were trained in the use of *The Accreditation Framework* and Accreditation Handbook.

Intensive Evaluation of Program Data

Prior to the accreditation visit, team members received copies of the Institutional Self-Study and other college documents. Team members received materials from the Commission staff regarding meeting and visit logistics, a draft of the interview schedule and possible assignments. Team members first met on Sunday afternoon February 27 at 1:00 p.m. Team members discussed areas of the Self-Study, interview schedule, interviewing techniques, writing assignments and provisions for various accreditation decisions. The team met with institutional representatives late Sunday afternoon, were hosted at a reception on the campus and met again later in the evening to discuss arrangements for visiting schools and conducting interviews.

On Monday and Tuesday, February 28 and 29 the team read documents in the team room on the campus, visited schools and conducted interviews. The team members conducted interviews with candidates, graduates, cooperating teachers and principals, school administrators, university administrators and members of the Teacher Education Advisory Board. Team members met for lunch on Monday, Monday evening, early Tuesday morning, Tuesday for lunch and on Tuesday evening. A mid-visit report was presented to the Department Chair and faculty at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday. The faculty was responsive to the requests of the team. The team completed the report on Tuesday evening, edited the report on Wednesday morning and presented the report at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday morning.

Preparation of the Accreditation Team Report

The team prepared the Accreditation Report, using a narrative format, according to the provisions of *The Accreditation Framework* and the Accreditation Handbook. For each of the Common Standards, the team made a decision of "Standard Met" or "Standard Not Met". The team also considered the various

factors that could lead to “Met Minimally” with either Quantitative or Qualitative concerns. The team then wrote a specific narrative and rationale for all standards being met and on the findings for each Common Standards and Program Standards.

The team concluded the report with a “Professional Comments” section for consideration by the institution. The comments were prepared as an advisory or consultation from the team members. They are not to be considered as part of the accreditation recommendations of the team.

Accreditation Decisions by the Team

The team completed a final draft of the Accreditation Team Report on Tuesday evening. The team reviewed the whole report on Tuesday night and again early on Wednesday morning. The team discussed each Common Standard and each Program Standard and decided on the basis of interviews and program documents that all eight Common Standards were fully met and that the twenty-one Program Standards were fully met including the CLAD Standards.

COMMITTEE ON ACCREDITATION TEAM REPORT

Institution: Occidental College

Program: Multiple and Single Subjects Credential with CLAD Emphasis

Dates of Visit: Sunday, February 27th to Wednesday, March 1st, 2000

Accreditation Team Recommendation: **ACCREDITATION**

Rationale:

The team recommends Accreditation based on the policies of the Accreditation Framework and the findings arrived at after reviewing the Self Study, interviewing all constituencies involved, and examining other documentation provided by the college.

The overall strength and effectiveness of the program was confirmed by participants, supervising practitioners, employers of graduates, and the public school community in the service area of the college. The team found that all eight Common Standards were met. The team also found that all Program Standards were met for the Multiple and Single Subjects – CLAD Emphasis program.

Accreditation Team Membership

Team Chair: Mary Humphreys
Buena Park School District

Team Members: Bob Infantino
University of San Diego

Suzanne Riley
California Department of Education

SUMMARY INFORMATION

Interviews Conducted*			Documents Reviewed
17	Program Faculty	x	Catalog
16	Institution Administration	x	Program Document
26	Candidates	x	Course Syllabi
16	Graduates	x	Candidate Files
2	Employers of Graduates	x	Fieldwork Handbook
22	Supervising Practitioners	x	Follow-up Survey Results
4	Advisors	x	Needs Analysis Results
7	School Administrators	x	Information Booklet
3	Credential Analyst	x	Field Experience Notebook
5	Advisory Committee		

* These numbers represent the total number of individual interviews conducted by the team members.

COMMON STANDARDS

Standard 1 – Educational Leadership

Standard Met

There is a clear vision for the preparation of candidates as expressed in both the presentation of the report and in the documents supporting the self-study. Interviews with faculty and students confirm that the vision is clearly articulated and that leadership and direction is evident. Administrators across the campus identify the department of Education as an integral and important part of the undergraduate life of the college. Education Department Faculty participate in college committees and structures.

Strengths:

The personal relationships shown through the leadership of the education department faculty and within the institution are commendable.

The team commends the department chair for connecting the California Standards for the Teaching Professions and the Occidental Standards for Teacher Leaders in an integrated and meaningful way.

Concerns:

None noted.

Standard 2 – Resources

Standard Met

The institution allocates sufficient resources within the overall college budget for the department to operate quality credential programs. Full time and adjunct faculty work very hard to provide training and personal attention to all of their students. The library and technology resources of the college are adequate and are being expanded. The department of education makes good use of the personnel and facilities of the library and the Center for Teaching and Learning for its classes and class assignments.

Interviews with the college administration reveal their awareness of the need to upgrade the space facilities for the department and have plans to do so in the future. There is also an awareness of the need to add personnel resources as the program grows and as requirements for continued support of the graduates of the program become a necessary part of credential programs.

Strengths:

All of the faculty are willing to put in whatever effort it takes to continue the high quality credential programs and combined credential and MAT Programs.

The college's sabbatical policy of a semester of release every four years for tenure track faculty is to commended.

Concerns:

As the department takes on new responsibilities such as involvement with the On Line Learning masters program, new faculty resources will need to be added. It appears that the department could comfortably add one full time faculty member as soon as possible to assist in the teaching and supervision work required to keep up the high quality of this credential program.

Standard 3 – Faculty**Standard Met**

The team finds that the faculty are held in high regard by all of their constituencies: students in the program, graduates, cooperating teachers, site administrators, and college administrators. Each faculty member, full time and adjunct, is expert in his/her field and all model the behaviors they expect of their students in training. Teaching is a high priority in both the department and in the college, and the faculty exhibit good teaching practices in both their syllabi and classes. Faculty are evaluated appropriately by the students and by the processes set up within the college. Tenured faculty are evaluated every five years, while non-tenured faculty are evaluated on a yearly basis until tenure.

Strengths:

The team commends the Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, which has directed the center for many years. Many interviews indicated the impact of her work on the life of students across the campus and on the enhancement of teaching skills of faculty in many departments of the college. Her work provided much visibility for the department of education throughout the college.

Concerns:

None noted.

Standard 4 – Evaluation**Standard Met**

The team determined that program evaluation, both formal and informal, is ongoing, and consistently implemented through a variety of strategies. These strategies include continuing self-evaluation by the faculty, course evaluations by students, formal and informal surveys of graduates, evaluations by cooperating teachers and administrators, and consultation with the Teacher Education Advisory Board. The faculty use the information gathered from these sources to aid them in program design and development and to implement recommended changes in the program.

Strengths:

The evaluation process is comprehensive in that it involves every course, faculty member, and candidate in the program. Evaluation results in changes in various aspects of the program and is shared with the Teacher Education Advisory Board.

Concerns:

None noted.

Standard 5 – Admissions**Standard Met**

The team found that admission to the program is based on well-defined admission criteria, and that the procedures for admission utilize multiple measures including documentation, writing samples, and personal interviews. Information regarding admission is readily available in the college catalogue as well as in department publications, the application packet, and in personal contact with the credential analyst and program faculty.

Strengths:

The admission process is very clear to applicants from their first contact with the department. Many candidates indicated that the personal contact they received during the admission process was very valuable and ensured a smooth admission into the program.

The team noted that the availability of the credential analyst to assist them was cited by numerous students as a major source of satisfaction with the program.

Concerns:

None noted.

Standard 6 – Advice & Assistance**Standard Met**

Advice and assistance are integral parts of the Multiple and Single Subject CLAD Emphasis programs at Occidental College. Prior to submitting an application, the prospective candidate meets with a professor in the education department to discuss his/her goals, needs, and experiences. The counseling guide, which is

filled out at this time, becomes the basis for the candidate's program of professional preparation at Occidental.

Candidates are kept informed about their status within the program and guided through the credentialing process very effectively. As requirements are completed, they are documented in the candidate's file. Required materials such as test scores and certificates of clearance for the credential application are a part of this file so that they are ready when the time comes to apply for the credential.

Ongoing advice and assistance are evident throughout the program. Full-time faculty members advise all students. They work collaboratively with college supervisors to provide assistance, to monitor progress and competence, and to assist students who are having difficulties, in order to retain only those candidates who are suited for entry into the profession.

Strengths:

The Center for Teaching and Learning on campus is available to students who need additional help in coursework. Test-taking strategies and preparation programs are available through this center. Students value the Center as a place where they can get help and support.

Students report that their problems and questions are handled in a timely and personal way, especially by the credential analyst and by each member of the faculty.

Concerns:

The team is concerned that some students do not feel that they receive adequate advice on appropriate courses to take during their undergraduate years to help them prepare for and pass the subject matter competency examinations. Even though there are no approved subject matter programs, students feel they could use some guidance from both the education department and from their academic advisors in other departments.

Standard 7 – School Collaboration

Standard Met

The team observes that the department of education maintains an outstanding, effective and long-standing system of collaboration between the college and local school districts. Candidates are carefully placed in schools where the teaching staff places emphasis on professional growth and dedication to teaching. The institution regularly reviews placements and responds to feedback from supervising teachers. The plan and rationale for the sequence of field experiences in the credential programs is clear.

Strengths:

Supervising practitioners consistently report that student teachers are prepared, mature, and willing to apply themselves fully to the student teaching experience.

Concerns:

None noted.

Standard 8 – Field Supervisors**Standard Met**

The college carefully screens district field supervisors who wish to serve as supervising practitioner to ensure that each practitioner is properly certified and experienced in the credential area. The candidates are highly valued and respected by school personnel. Supervising practitioners reported substantial ongoing contact and communication with the college supervisors.

Strengths:

The college recognizes and rewards field personnel with letters of recognition, a stipend, and an end of the year event. At this event the student teachers publicly acknowledge the contribution of the supervising practitioners.

Concerns:

None noted.

MULTIPLE AND SINGLE SUBJECTS WITH CLAD EMPHASIS**Findings on the Standards:****All Standards Met**

The team reviewed the institutional self-study and the supporting documentation, and interviewed members of all constituencies involved in the program. After careful study, the team finds all Program Standards to be met in the Multiple and Single Subject - CLAD Emphasis programs.

The mission of the Multiple and Single Subject - CLAD Emphasis programs is to train educational leaders for the classroom. This mission is evident throughout the program. All of the curriculum supports and enhances this mission. The faculty and staff model the behaviors that they expect candidates to exhibit. The candidates and graduates realize this and they, in turn, practice these behaviors in the classroom.

The CLAD emphasis is embedded within the Multiple and Single Subjects programs. The team noted the substantial manner in which the faculty incorporate CLAD strategies within the various foundation and methods courses within the program. This results in candidates having a deep understanding of

how to work effectively in multicultural classrooms. The team recognizes the department and the college for its commitment to building a diverse public school teaching force.

The work in candidates' portfolios reflects candidate competency in the Multiple Subject, Single Subject, and CLAD Standards 11-20 and candidate awareness of the California Standards for the Teaching Profession. Graduates and employers of graduates reported that students who complete the MS/SS CLAD program at Occidental College are well prepared to teach in California's schools.

Strengths:

The faculty is to be commended for its dedication and its demonstration of a commitment to meeting the individual needs of the students. Current students, alumni, and graduates all consistently shared their appreciation of the faculty's willingness to support individual professional growth and to share knowledge and expertise.

Current students, recent graduates, and school personnel all report that the student teaching experiences are outstanding, and are enriched by weekly visits from college supervisors who offer feedback to both the student teacher and to the supervising practitioners regarding the growth of the student teacher.

The faculty is commended for modeling excellent teaching for students, including integrating technology into coursework, utilizing a wide variety of instructional strategies, and creating effective learning environments.

Consistent monitoring of student progress throughout the program is impressive. From the counseling guide through all of the requirements up to and including the credential application process the students are kept informed of their progress and of the various requirements which must be met for successful completion of the program.

Candidates and graduates commented on the quality of the Curriculum Library in the department of education building. Through this library, students and graduates have access to equipment and materials equivalent to what many districts provide for their teachers. It is not an unusual practice for graduates, even after they are employed by a district, to return to the Curriculum Library to prepare instructional materials.

Concerns:

The team noted several comments from practitioners concerning the fact that student teaching calendars and the college calendar do not match school calendars. Thus most student teachers do not have the opportunity to contribute to final evaluation of students and are not able to participate in assessment of students at the close of the school year.

The team is concerned that some student teachers appear to be placed in classrooms in which instruction is being delivered in the primary language of the pupils. Since this program does not offer a BCLAD credential and does not provide training for primary language instruction, the team cautions against the above practice.

The team observes that, while students are completing multiple field experiences, there is no systematic way in which these field experiences are documented in student files or are listed on the student teaching application. Such documentation is essential to assure that candidates indeed have appropriate and well-rounded field experiences prior to and during student teaching.

PROFESSIONAL COMMENTS:

The team recommends a closer working relationship with the other academic departments. People who were interviewed suggested that the department consider using faculty from other academic departments as field supervisors for student teachers.

The Liberal Studies MAT could be strengthened by requiring that students select courses which reflect subjects commonly taught in the public schools. Current practice in course selection appears scattered and uneven. The team recommends a more focused approach in determining courses to be taken in this program.

The team recommends that the college consider developing approved programs in select single subject academic areas and in the liberal studies-multiple subject area.

The team recommends that the department develop an Institutional Intern Program or consider closer collaboration with existing District Intern Programs in their service area.

The team recognizes that the institution has created strong links to local BTSA programs. The team recommends that the institution continue to strengthen this collaborative partnership to position itself for the full implementation of SB 2042.

Supervising teachers indicated a desire to meet with college supervisors and candidates before the candidates begin their assignments.